

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF GEORGIA
(ATLANTA DIVISION)**

**UNITED STATES SECURITIES
AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION,**

Plaintiff,

v.

JOHN J. WOODS, *et al.*,

Defendants.

Civil Action No. _____

**PLAINTIFF SEC’S MOTION FOR A TEMPORARY
RESTRAINING ORDER AND OTHER EMERGENCY RELIEF**

The Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”) respectfully seeks emergency relief from this Court to stop a \$100 million Ponzi scheme being run by Defendants John J. Woods (“Woods”) and Southport Capital (“Southport”), an investment advisory firm that Woods owns and controls. For the past decade, Woods and other investment adviser representatives at Southport have falsely told investors that they will earn guaranteed returns by investing in Defendant Horizon Private Equity III, LLC (“Horizon III”). In reality, Horizon III was also owned and controlled by Woods; the company generated little revenue; and the returns paid to investors largely came from the funds of later investors. As of July 2021, there are more than 400 investors in Horizon III, residing in over 20 states, who are owed

\$110 million in principal. Many of the investors in Horizon III are elderly retirees who were preyed upon by Woods and other investment advisers at Southport.

As explained more fully in the attached memorandum of law, emergency relief is necessary to stop this ongoing Ponzi scheme and to prevent the dissipation of assets. Woods and Horizon, through Southport's investment advisers, have been raising more than \$600,000 per month in new investments, and without immediate relief there is significant risk of additional victims being defrauded. Accordingly, the SEC respectfully asks that the Court enter (i) a temporary restraining order; (ii) an order freezing the assets of Defendants; (iii) an order appointing a receiver over Defendants; (iv) an order expediting discovery, preventing the destruction of documents, and requiring an accounting; and (v) an order requiring the defendants to show cause why a preliminary injunction should not be entered.

CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, the SEC respectfully requests that the Court issue a temporary restraining order and the other relief described above.

Dated: August 20, 2021

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Harry B. Roback

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CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE

This is to certify that the foregoing was prepared using Times New Roman 14 point font in accordance with Local Rule 5.1 (B).

/s/ Harry B. Roback
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